

THE NATIONAL ERA.

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THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, APRIL 14, 1851.

For the National Era.

LIFE ON PRAIRIE DE LA FLEUR.—No. 10.

BY MARY IRVING.

THE NOBLEMAN'S CHILDREN.

"The rank is but the gulf's stamp,
The man's the good for that."—BURKE.

I wonder whether every American child who has read an "Old World" story book has not been fancy to sketch an earl, viscount, or some pattern of "nobility." Thanks to the Puritan Fathers, there are no noblemen but *Nature's* west, of the wide Atlantic; and she, in her womanly dignity, has shown herself somewhat more fastidious than the knight-dubbing kings and queens of days of chivalry. So the child's curiosity is thrown back on itself for material, and colors to fashion his picture; and imagination frames and gilds it grandly for his mind-gallery. It is the recollection of this childish picture that makes the grown-up child so eager oftentimes to touch the hem of a titled foreigner's garment, and which has given Europeans sometimes reason to rosy, out of their sleeves, at our republicanism run wild.

You are waiting for a veritable sketch, to compare with your various ideals, and I will hasten to give it you. If it disappoints you, find fault with the pencil or the original, just as it may please you.

In the cabin of a lonely vessel ploughing the sea-green waves that wash Long Island's southern shore, lounged a half-sick girl, enveloped in a tattered wrapping-gown. She was listlessly turning the dog-eared pages of a ship-worn novel, leaning languidly upon one elbow, when the bit of a door was thrown open, and a little dame, as rosy as Aurora herself, jumped down the steps at a bound.

"Oh, Sabra!" she cried out, in a pretty half Scotch brogue, "it's high to America we are, and you bidding between decks yet! Up w' you, and spy at Sandy Hook!"

"Dinna bother me, Jeanie! What's Sandy Hook to me, or America either, for s'at?" replied the girl, in a languid petulance.

"Mac bid me fetch you to the fore deck," persisted the rosy little Jeanie. "The breez will better your head-all; and he bides waiting. Dina tarry!"

"I care nae a sea-shell for the New Ward, nor aught that's in it!" returned the sister, more vehemently. "My ain bonnie Scotland! I shall ne'er step on its hearth ma'ir! She turned her face from the ship's side, and hid it from her sister.

"Ye mauns greef, Sabra!" coaxed the other, putting her arm around her. "Mind ye ne'er of auld Timothe's tales and sayings? Ie bade ye be cheered, ye ken, for it was a happy life we had w' room to live on the big prairie!"

"Jeanie!" called her brother's voice, impatiently, from above.

"I'm maunin' you," said she, starting up. "If you wad but follow in the plaid, and tak' one peep at the bonny sunset!"

But Sabra's perverseness was unconquerable, and Jeanie left her to sigh and make moan over her own miseries, while she flew up, light as a roe, to toss her arms in the fresh land breezes, and dance with delight at the thought of treading green grass again, and gathering flowers, though it were on a stranger shore.

McDonald, Sabra, and Jeanie Spencer, were the children of a Scottish laird of high family, but decayed fortune. Orphaned in early life, they were reared and educated by aristocratic and wealthy relatives, who taught them from childhood this first great lesson—that the blood that flowed among their veins had welled up from a spring of pride and honor, far back in antiquity.

The two elder were not slow in learning this lesson, but little Jeanie was sadly plagued by some perversely plebeian tastes. She never could be made to feel that she was a "born lady," and must sit, walk, or ride, in stately indifference, or more condescension, to her inferiors. Indeed, the child could not be convinced that she had any inferiors among those who spoke kindly to her. She loved her nurse as well as she did her pride old aunt, and a great deal better; and she was never backward in showing her wayward preferences. Many was the lecture on her station in society, and many the judgment that the poor child was forced to receive for wilfully forgetting it. She loved nothing better than, when her aunt's or governess's terrible eye was turned, to skip down into the kitchen with the maids, hear their songs and stories, eat their buns and batter-cakes, and, worse than all, actually to take lessons in the unlady-like arts of scrubbing and cooking.

If a few, measured step was heard approaching, Jeanie's sport was at an end. She must either run to hide under the greatest floury sprout of the cook, or dodge through back doors and by-ways back into the patrician halls of the mansion. If she failed, she could calculate how many hours she should be doomed to sit on a high stool, with dangling feet, embroidering a three-footed white dog in the corner of her sampler, under the despot eye of her aunt. Poor Jeanie used to sit, at such times, biting her thread, or pouting her red lips, and wish that she had been a maid-servant, or a robin, or a lamb; or even a speckled trout, for that had the whole brook to foulder in; but anything but a Spencer of the Spencers, to sit on an ottoman and work worsted, and turn out her toes when she walked—and like a "proper young lady!" Oh! she would make herself very miserable about her destiny for half an hour, and then would forget that she ever had any miseries.

They had not lived thus long upon our sociable prairie without forming many acquaintances, besides their countrymen. Even Sabra, though she had been large enough to be useful, and undignified enough to be perpetually trying to be so, in one way or another. Sabra, who took the delicate and languid airs of "the fine lady," as naturally as a mocking-bird takes music lessons, prided herself not a little on the music of all such plebeian matters as pertain to the comforts of life. Her little white hand was made to wave, not to work; and in truth, it seemed much fitter for the former than the latter purpose.

When McDonald had nearly finished his university studies, various changes in family affairs changed the aspect of his own and his sister's destiny. As the young people were fortunates, and could consequently make no figure, sustain no standing, in their own proud country, it was resolved to send them fortune-seeking to America.

Jeanie jumped half across the hall at the first proposition of the master, and sat very quietly

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 1851.

WHOLE NO. 224.

most abundant in such offerings are also the first in scholarship, and especially distinguished by self-respect and orderly deportment. Hundreds of the pupils, by this honorable distinction, have also been sought for to fill places alike respectable, profitable, and useful.

For the National Era.

TO THE WORKMEN OF AMERICA.

BY GEORGE W. PUTNAM.

"The land shall not be sold forever."—Moses.

"There is no foundation in nature or in natural law, why a set of words upon parchment should convey the dominion of land."—BLACKSTONE.

Ye tolling millions of the land,
Whose power is guilt,
Who's given us the prison house
For Legislation here.

Whole full strength from the early dawn
To eve for breadstuffs given—

Ye not to thy kindred
Are the angel things of heaven.

Early doomed to whom whose utmost stretch
Scarce brings the scanty bread,
Starved to the wretched who,
And yet to the world's end.

Thus blighted and blind, the light of truth
May not reach your mortal eye;

For ye do not leave your task to call,
Through Christians were passing by.

Ye foul Mammon's worshippers
Are turned from your high—

Thy strong chain of necessity
Galling body, souring soul.

With Death's early blight upon your brow,
Henceforth to the grave the slave

Through this world's dim-lighted workshop,
We grope on the grave.

That a few may ride in splendor,
Climb Ambition's stony way,
Be in sun and in clothe cloth,
And fare sumptuous every day,

Ye how your neck and cover
To your brother's yoke and rod,
And charge wrong and foul confusion
To the blighted hand of God!

The great field, the water brooks
Ye made and gave us,

Heeds seed time, ploughs harvest,
Sends the early rain and dew.

Through your shrews crack with labor,
Scarce the hunger cry is stilled,

While those free land's toil creases
Unbroken and untilled!

Ay! though your name is Luxon,
We toil to earn our bread and meat;

Who's toil to earn our work
Which ye yourselves should do.

Ye make yourselves as chess men,
To be pushed about the board,

While the wealth your ceaseless toil creates
Piles up the gilded hours!

While ye duly den your manhood
To keep some party name,

To be a king, and to kill
A king of shame!

Ye waste at their proud bidding,

To the sound of party drum,

Of a "good time to come!"

A song—not that New Hampshire's song
So thrilling do sing—

But the drone of who holds his arms,

And own Fear as his King.

High up in the air, who's not look

Oppression in the fast?

But hides him from the storm which pours
Upon his hapless race!

He sings of a brighter dawn,

And of a better day,

When, At Pocock's gentle voice,

Dark Crime shall flee away!

While's now'er of your trampled heads

The heavens show no light,

And your groans are louder than love

There waiteth deeper sighs!

A good time comes, my boys—

Let not the laborer doubt it—

When they can't get bread to eat,

Must learn to eat without shame,

Keep step, then, to your shameless march;

With your hands to your sides,

God help you! but your "glorious times!"

Seems a long time coming!

Where is power? what shall your song

The tide of ruin check?

Lo! draymond's sons and butcher's girls

Ride roughshod o'er our neck!

Our wounds, like those of murdered men,

Eaten at each tooth;

Ye waste at their proud bidding,

To the sound of party drum,

Of a "good time to come!"

Tak's yore laws—tak's all the lost!

Our "patriot" rulers make,

None lift the injured workmen,

Or his dark thraldom break.

If they chain Oppression's bloodhound up,

From the collar slips; and

And their legal, like Sodom's fruit,

Is ashes on our lips!

Be patient—till thy hope is dead,

Till your brother's slave shall change his hue,

The leopard change his spot;

Then may the heart of Avarice

Be willing to live,

And the daughter of the leech,

Bled fitless, cease crying Giv's!

Oppression in her armor house

Hath great array of chains,

For their white Serf on the Northern hills,

Ah! when will the day come when

One wears the heavy chain which clanks,

Which galls the grosser part;

One bears the name of Fremyan,

With the foot-mark on his heart!

One grins 'neath the stinging lash,

The sport of Tyrant's word;

One bawls, for his children's bread;

To the Northern Cord!

There's no place to stand and stand

Before the masters stand;

But the strong arm of Oppression

Shows the arms of Oppression!

And the Paras and Ballyot Box!

God! keep New England's hills

The workmen's arm's;

Soon may her children blest be the hour

When her sons fly—

When her daughters fly—

When her sons fly—

When

THE NATIONAL ERA.

For the National Era.

TO PUBLISH.

BY MISS ALICE CAREY.

Our own old-fashioned honest-and-truthful newspaper makes it fair! For it now the heart is blinding, And that you and I are there.

It was a mournful, mournful morning

When we parted in such pain—

My dear ones, O my sisters,

Shall we ever meet again?

Then, the faded glass of autumn

On the graves of kindred tell—

I have prayed since then, how often,

To be sleeping just as well.

Now the mantle of the spring time

Is all dabbled with the dew,

But I see no flowers nor sunshine

When so far away from you:

But, instead, the orchard meadow,

And the oak tree, and the well,

And the cheerful parter, plowing

With the smile of you and El.

O, the circle has grown narrow,

That was once so gay spread

Round the dear heart of the homestead—

Some are gone, and some are dead.

New York, April, 1851.

DUTIES MEN OWE TO CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

To the Editors of the National Era:

DEAR SIR:—I have received, through the politeness of a friend, a copy of a sermon on the duties men owe to God and to Governments, delivered at the Central Presbyterian Church, Buffalo, New York, by C. John L. D. D. This sermon has been extensively circulated throughout the country, to the no small terror of persons who contest either passive or active resistance to the Fugitive Slave Law. And as is usual on all such occasions, it is filled with the ideas of terrible wars and devastations as the certain consequences of its unfaithful administration. I consider that it fell short of its purpose, however, to the scope of the sermon: for his text is "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," and I was more forcibly strucken with the palpable contradictions, the evident results of the consciousness of a great sin, laboring under the weight of a guilty conscience, than by God. The wrong position into which he endeavors to thrust these religious denominations, &c., who have professed by ecclesiastical enactments their members from holding any office necessarily involving the sin of slave-hunting, or any other manner of assistance to the master in retarding the fugitive slaves, may be seen upon page 20, and in the following language:

"To allege that there is a higher law which makes slavery, *per se*, sinful, and that all legislation to the right of masters, and enjoining the retention of slaves, is therefore void and without authority, and may be constitutionally resisted by arms and violence, is an infidel position, contradicted by both Testaments; which may be taught in the gospel of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and in the revelation of the skeptics and Jacobins who promised France, half a century ago, to the slaves, and who have professed by the Supreme Lawgiver in the Divine economy which he gave to the Hebrew State, and that 'all the ingenuity of all the Abolitionists in the United States can never destroy the necessary conclusion of this admitted Divine sanction of slavery.'—Page 21."

Here it is impossible to mistake the Doctor. He is plain; and while we from our heart pity the man who with the Bible before him can think as he does, yet he is much more consistent than the pitiful apologist for slavery, who, in his manner of argument, is only retarding the finding of his master, may be seen upon page 20, and in the following language:

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This may do for a flourish upon a Thanksgiving to the Doctor's congregation, and may help them to think that they are safe from his arraignment; but it cannot carry conviction to my mind that even the Doctor himself is in earnest. My design is not so much to review the whole of the Doctor's sermon, but only the two following assertions:

1. "The decisions of Governments upon matters within their jurisdiction, though they may be erroneous, yet, from the necessity of the case, absolute!"—Page 13.

II. "To allege that there is a higher law, that makes slavery, *per se*, sinful, is contradicted by both Testaments!" And again: "the existence of domestic slavery is expressly allowed, sanctioned, and regulated by the Supreme Lawgiver, in that divine economy which he gave to the Hebrew State."—Page 20.

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